

WHEN IS A BUILDING PERMIT REQUIRED?

A building permit is required when any structural change or when alterations are made to an existing building or when any new construction is undertaken. Normal building maintenance (paint or carpet) does not typically require a building permit in most instances. Separate permits for plumbing, mechanical and electrical work may also be required when applicable.

If you are planning a residential project that involves structural changes to your home, such as building a deck, enclosing a deck, bedroom addition, or adding a stair, you will need a building permit. New commercial projects, tenant finish or alteration to an existing building, additions, interior demolition, demolition of a building and a change of use of a building also require a building permit.

The permit process ensures that minimum safety standards are met and that construction meets local building and zoning requirements. Make sure you understand the building codes and local ordinances before proceeding with any improvement project.

Permit Requirements - It is not surprising that many property owners, including condo unit owners, are not familiar with local building codes. Many property owners think that it is the contractor's responsibility to make sure a building permit has been obtained. This is not true. **The property owner is held responsible for obtaining the building permit.**

The building permit is not another red-tape nuisance. There are good, sound reasons for having these regulations. First and foremost, **the building code protects YOU!** It ensures that the completed work meets specific minimum code standards that will protect you and your neighbors. Insurance companies require building permits for any work required to be inspected on property they insure. Sometimes a contractor may try to skirt the building permit requirement. If the code inspector finds the work in progress without the required permit, the property owner is cited (and not the contractor) for having work done without a permit. This can result in double fees for the permit and/or fines for having work done without a permit.

The City of Longmont requires building permits for the following reasons:

- The State of Colorado requires standards of construction for all properties in the State. In our area, those standards are even higher than some parts of Colorado due to wind and snow load requirements to keep a building structurally safe. The State relies on local government to enforce these regulations.
- Construction projects that involve outside work require compliance with zoning regulations that include proper property line setbacks, adherence to land use regulations and clearance to utility easements and right-of-ways.

- Work required to have a permit must be done by City of Longmont licensed contractors with insurance coverage to protect you and your neighbors. If you do work, or have any work done without obtaining a permit, you could be incurring liability in the event of a fire or accident related to the work. In some circumstances, your property insurance could be invalidated. Improperly completed work can result in damage to your property and that of your neighbors.

The tables below cover the more common projects - it does not cover all activities that require permits. It is advisable to call the Building Department **before starting your work** if you are not certain if a permit is required. Remember: Reputable city licensed contractors know which projects require permits in Longmont and they obtain the permits as required.

When application is made for a building permit, the City of Longmont building inspection office checks to make sure the contractor is properly licensed, insured and that the work is done by a licensed professional with the required liability insurance. As the project is being completed, a city building inspector inspects the work to make sure it is done properly and complies with code. This protects you! These requirements protect you and your neighbors from shoddy work that may result in later damage (i.e. fire, leaks and structural failure)

So next time you consider having work done on your property, please call the City of Longmont first at 303-651-8332 or check the city web page at ci.longmont.co.us to find out if a permit is required and then make sure your contractor obtains the building permit before work begins.

Key to Tables (Permits Required):

- 1 – Building
- 2 – Plumbing
- 3 – Electrical
- 4 – Mechanical
- 5 – Sign
- 6 – Manufactured Housing Hookup
- 7 – Fire Alarm
- 8 – Fire Sprinkler
- 9 – Use of Public Places
- 10 – Right – of – Way

Routing Abbreviations (Review Required):

- B – Building Inspection
- C – Code Enforcement
- E – Engineering
- F – Fire Division
- P – Planning Division

Permit Requirements Guideline

Specific Projects	No Permit Req'd	Permit(s) Required	Review Required	Site Plan Req'd
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New Structures on Private Land

Building new residential structures, additions, patio covers or enclosures and carports		1,2,3,4	B,E,F,P	X
New non-residential commercial structures or mixed-use buildings		1,2,3,4,5,7,8	B,E,F,P	X
Moving existing structures to new location		1,2,3,4,10	B,E,F,P	X
Moving a mobile home into a mobile home park		6	B	
Residential detached garages over 120 square feet		1	B	X
Change the use of existing structure on any property commercial or residential (examples: Change single family residence to retail, garage to living space, convert attic to living space, basement apartment)		1,2,3,4,7,8	B,E,F,P	X

Any Demolition or Condemned Building

Demolition of entire or portion of building including interior demolition		1	B	X
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Interior Repair and Replacement

Foundation repair or replaced (must be engineered)		1,10	B	
Ordinary repairs to residential buildings up to 4 units	X			
Ordinary repairs to commercial buildings		1,2,3,4,7,8	B,F,P	
Tuck pointing, exterior or interior painting, drywall patching (less than 48 square feet), floor sanding and re-finishing, carpeting, re-tiling tub surround, wall papering, cabinet and counter top replacement (plumbing fixtures not moved) replace flooring with like materials and similar finish work	X			
Interior wall paneling applied directly to wall surface	X			
Ceiling tile applied directly to ceiling surface	X			
Installation of battery operated smoke detectors	X			
Installation of hard-wired smoke detectors		1,3	B	
Installation of fire sprinkler or fire alarm systems		2,3	B,F	
Replacement of minor electrical, mechanical or plumbing part that will not alter the original approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe	X			
The stopping of leaks in drains, waste, vent or water pipe provided that if any concealed trap or piping listed above becomes defective and must be replaced, such work shall be considered new and a permit obtained and inspections made	X			
Clearing of stoppages or repairing leaks in pipes or fixtures only requiring removal and reinstallation of fixtures provided such repairs do not involve new piping or rearrangement of fixtures	X			
Portable heating, ventilation or cooling equipment considered to be cord and plug equipment	X			
Permanent heating, ventilation or cooling equipment (furnace, air conditioner, water heater, boiler)		1,3,4	B	

Permit Requirements Guideline (continued)

Specific Projects	No Permit Req'd	Permit(s) Required	Review Required	Site Plan Req'd
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Exterior Repairs and Replacement or Additions

Roof or shingles (over 100 square feet) replaced		1	B	
Roof or shingles (less than 100 square feet) replaced	X			
Repair or replace siding or exterior covering		1	B	
Adding windows, replacing existing windows including frames and glass replacement		1	B	
Replacement or addition of exterior doors and fire-rated interior doors including frames		1	B	
Installation of storm windows or doors or replacement glazing of storm windows	X			
Installation or replacement of gutters or downspouts	X			
New aluminum or vinyl soffits, fascia boards, rake boards or overhangs with no structural changes	X			

Addition or Alteration to Interior or Exterior Construction and Accessory Buildings

Any addition to commercial or residential property		1,2,3,4,7,8	B,F,P	
Any work which involves the removal, cutting or installation of any structural beams, headers, joists (including replacement) or bearing supports		1	B	
Construction of any wood or composite deck, ramp or porch (including handicap accessible ramps)		1	B	
Addition or alteration involving attached or detached structures (includes garage, shop, accessory building)		1,3	B	
Swimming pools with water depth over 24 inches		1,3	B,C,P	
Playground equipment accessory to one or two family dwellings (with no walking surface over 24 inches above grade and less than 120 sq. ft.)	X			
Playground equipment as above with a walking surface 120 square feet and larger		1	B,C	
Replacement of existing permitted fences with same material and height (not installing posts)		1	B,C	
Storage sheds (less than 120 square feet in size)	X			
Storage sheds exceeding 120 square feet (must be subordinate in area, extent and purpose to principal structure), is incidental to and serves the principal use		1	B,C	
All residential additions or alterations involving bathroom, kitchen, bedroom or basement		1,2,3,4	B	
Shade cloth structure (includes carports) not engineered NOT ALLOWED		Structures not allowed		
Fences 6 feet high or less as allowed in LMC		1	B,C	
Lawn sprinkler system (one and two family dwellings)		2	B	
Lawn sprinkler systems (other than above)		2	B	
Signs Per LMC Sec. 15.06.050 (exempted signs)	X			
Signs (other than above)		5	C	
Tent structures exceeding 200 square feet and individual canopies exceeding 700 square feet		1	B,F	
Additions to Mobile Homes (NOT ALLOWED)		Not allowed		